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LAND, MY ENGLAND

A WAR ANTHOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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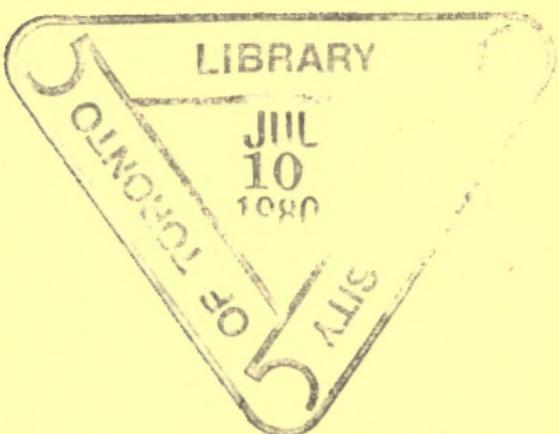
ENGLAND,
MY ENGLAND
A WAR
ANTHOLOGY

By
GEORGE GOODCHILD



LONDON
JARROLD & SONS
1914

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY
A TRUE POET AND BELOVED
OF ALL WHO KNEW HIM

*What have I done for you,
England, my England ?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own ?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near
Whispering terrible things and dear,
As the song on your bugles blown,
England —
Round the world on your bugles blown !*

I am indebted to Mr. H. W. Bliss for permission to include "Any friend to any friend" and "To Belgium"; to Mr. Bernard Fagan for "The Hour"; to Mr. Edmund Holmes for "Christ or Neitzsche" and "Standing Still": to Miss Vivanti Chartes for "The Heart of Italy"; to Mr. Walter Grogan for the "Home Flag"; to Miss Iris Tree for "In Time of War"; to Mrs. W. E. Henley for "England, my England"; and to Mr. F. W. Bourdillon for "False Gods."

G. G.

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POEMS INSPIRED
BY THE
PRESENT WAR,
1914

SONG OF THE SOLDIERS

WHAT of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray
To hazards whence no tears can win us ;
What of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away ?

Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye
Who watch us stepping by,
With doubt and dolorous sigh ?
Can much pondering so hoodwink you !
Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye ?

Nay. We see well what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
Dalliers as they be !
England's need are we ;

Her distress would set us rueing :
Nay. We see well what we are doing,
Though some may not see !

In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
March we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cock say
Night is growing gray
To hazards whence no tears can win us !
Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away.

Thomas Hardy.

“ANY FRIEND TO ANY FRIEND”

Ev'n as I thought of you your soul had sped,
Friend of old, happy, far off, boyhood days,
And, as across the sea I turned my gaze,
The soil of France with your brave blood was red!
Blame not the shears that slit the thin yarn thread.
Though life be lost, immortal is the praise!
Would I were with you crowned with victory's bays,
O Happy Warrior 'midst our English dead!

Yea! God of Battles, what a time to die!
Thy Courts are echoing to the tuck of drum,
The wide days flame with comet souls that fly
Triumphant, at a bound, from Earth to Heaven,
The nights ablaze, with their white passage riven,
As, trailing clouds of glory, swift they come.

H. W. Bliss.

TO BELGIUM

GREAT-HEARTED Belgium ! England weeps for you ;
But, like a mother, smiling through her tears,
Glad that her son, in his first manhood's years,
Has borne himself as she would wish him do.
So, long ago, the Tyrol patriot drew
(Scorning, as you have scorned, all craven fears)
Into one loyal heart six Austrian spears,
And by that splendid gap let Freedom through !
Shall England, mother of the free, forget ?
Oh ! let her rather sink beneath her seas !
Take you this promise, Belgium—him who set
This cup to your brave lips her hands shall seize,
And he shall pay, in blood and tears, the debt
And drain a bitterer chalice to the lees !

H. W. Bliss.

THE HOUR

We've shut the gates by Dover Straits,
And North where the tides run free,
Cheek by jowl, our watchdogs prowl,
Grey hulks in a greyer sea.
And the prayer that England prays to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
As the foam of our plunging prows is white;
We have stood for peace, and we war for right.
God give us victory!

Now slack, now strung, from the mainmast flung,
The flag throbs fast in the breeze;
Strained o'er the foam, like the hearts at home
That beat for their sons on the seas.
For mothers and wives are praying to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
But we've no time, for our lips are tight,
Our fists are clenched, and we're stripped to fight.
God give us victory!

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The west winds blow in the face of the foe—
Old Drake is beating his drum—
They drank to “The Day,” for “The Hour” we
pray.
The day and the hour have come.
The sea-strewn Empire prays to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
Thou didst give the seas into Britain’s might,
For the freedom of Thy seas we smite.
God give us victory!

James Bernard Fagan.

CHRIST OR NIETZSCHE ?

Christ or Nietzsche? Cross or sword?
Love of kind or lust of power?
Choose, O Man. God strikes the hour.
Choose thy symbol. Choose thy Lord.

Christ or Nietzsche? Love or hate?
Life in death, or death in life?
War for peace, or war for strife?
Choose thy future. Choose thy fate.

Christ or Nietzsche? Right or might?
Truth of heaven, or lies from Hell?
Healing balm, or bursting shell?
Freedom's day, or serfdom's night?

Christ or Nietzsche? Gain or loss?
Who can lose when loss is gain?
Who can shrink from toil or pain
When Christ triumphs on the Cross?

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Christ or Nietzsche? Just is war:
True the scales with which it weighs.
In the fullness of the days
Right than might is mightier far.

Christ or Nietzsche? Look above.
Though the war-clouds throng and drift,
Clear through every widening rift
Glows the stainless heaven of love.

Christ or Nietzsche? Love or hate?
Self-surrender, or self-will?
Choose, and through the years fulfil,
O mankind, thy chosen fate.

Edmond Holmes.

STANDING STILL

God be praised that I stand at last
Facing the enemy, rifle in hand:
Hist ! how the bullets whistle past—
And still we wait the word of command,
Though our fellows are dropping fast.

When will it be my turn, I wonder ;
Where and how am I doomed to die ?
Will a sword-blade cleave my skull asunder,
Or the lightning flash from a battery
Strike me dead ere I hear its thunder ?

Will one of those whistling bullets bring
The message of doom, or, worse than all,
Will a crashing shell leap in and fling
Fragments of death, or shall I fall
Where bayonets clash and ring ?

Or is it a boon too precious by far—
Too blest a fate—to die as I stand—

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Death 'mid the press and clamour of war—
Death red and hot for the motherland—
For the land where the dear ones are ?

Mother of nations ! Mother of men !
I drank in life at thy Titan breast :
Thine arms of love were round me then ;
And if ever I muse how my birth was blest
I am clasped to thy heart again.

Mistress of empires ! Queen of the sea !
The pulse of a strong exultant hope
Beats in thy breast till it beats in me :
Thou hast given my life an unbounded scope ;
I am proud in the pride of thee.

I reap the fruit of the toil and tears,
Of the deeds of the heroes that made thee great,
Of the travail throes of a thousand years—
Of the patient courage that conquered fate—
Of doubts and despairing fears.

Each drop of blood that thy children shed—
Each spasm of pain that broke their breath—
For me they suffered—for me they bled :—
O Mother's love, I am dumb till death ;
I could speak were I cold and dead.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Thou knowest how often I strove to break
The fetters of speech for a moment's space :—
How love grew a thirst that I yearned to slake—
How I prayed that Heaven would grant me grace
To strike one blow for thy sake.

One blow for England—however light—
One drop in the stream of her ample life—
One breaking bubble—one foam-bell white
In one of those whirlpools of eddying strife
That mark her resistless might.

And here I stand—and the fates fulfil
My heart's one wish—my devoutest prayer :
I am standing obedient to England's will :—
Not mine to ask how my comrades fare :—
She has bidden me stand here still.

I murmur not : I am more than blest :
She has found me a foot of earth to defend :
She has marked me the way I may serve her best :
She judges the issue : she knows the end :—
Mine to work—be the meaning unguessed.

So little a work—but I thank God most
For this—that the issue itself is large—
That all may serve it, and none may boast :

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The pulse beats high in a cavalry charge—
Is it nothing to hold one's post

When shells are screaming to left and right ?
When grape is falling in scathing showers ?
I stand here still, with as stern delight
As ever in fierce exultant hours
Bade hearts beat fast for the fight.

Mother of nations ! and if I fell
I dare to dream that thy love would spare
A sigh—and it may be a tear :—ah ! well,
I hear the voice that accepts my prayer
In the scream of the passing shell.

Edmond Holmes.

THE HEART OF ITALY

“ITALY, fair Italy, what may thy pleasure be?
Come, rest thee on thy sunlit shores, thy hands
around thy knee.
Recline upon thy laurel-wreaths in *far niente*
sweet,
And watch the golden sunset on thy waving fields
of wheat.

“Italy, fair Italy, what is this war to thee?
Lay down thy shield, and fan thy cheek with
palms from Tripoli.
Cast down thy shining helmet, plant thy banner in
the grass
And smile into thy twofold sea as in a looking-
glass.”

• • •
The Prussian eagle’s wings are black, the Prussian
beak is red,
The Prussian talons tear and rend the wounded
and the dead.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Ah, life is short, and peace is safe, and *far niente*
sweet !

But Italy, fair Italy, is rising to her feet.

Not all her sons have fallen 'neath the crescent
and the star ;

The sound of Garibaldi's Hymn comes ringing
from afar.

. . And Italy, the beautiful, in sacramental awe
Reveals within her milk-white breast the blood-
red heart of war.

A. Vivanti Chartes.

THE HOME FLAG

To North and South and East and West,
Wherever the Briton homes,
On lonely road or sheltered quest,
Whatever the trail he roams,
To-day a call rings loud and clear,
That hearing no man can lag,
It stirs our hearts both far and near,
The call of the old Home Flag !

Red—for the blood that was shed for it
Ere ever we saw the light ;
White—for the men that are dead for it,
Giving their all for its might ;
Blue—as the seas that roll under it,
Far as the ends of the world—
Flag of our race, with its Cross of God's Grace,
We hail it, our Hope unfurled !

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Wide-strewn the Empire that we hold,
And never our work is done,
The chain that links us purest gold—
The love of a son for son.
And none may hear it and say it nay,
We are one in silk or rag ;
O, sons of the Motherland, obey
The call of the old Home Flag !

Red—for the blood that was shed for it
Ere ever we saw the light ;
White—for the men that are dead for it,
Giving their all for its might ;
Blue—as the seas that roll under it,
Far as the ends of the world—
Flag of our race, with its Cross of God's Grace,
We hail it, our Hope unfurled !

Walter E. Grogan.

IN TIME OF WAR

THE days come up as beggars in the street
With empty hands, as summers without sun
That bring no gold of corn. With weary feet
We tread our ways not caring where they run.

The poet's song all golden in his throat
Turns to a blood-red chapter, rage unfurled ;
The hunter's horn has made its little note
A trumpet-blast that shall awake the world.

From silent shores where languid tides have swept,
From quiet hills where dreaming people reign,
Strange eyes drop water that have never wept,
Men rush to slaughter that have never slain :

For look ! the gorgeous armies marching onwards.
And look ! the draggled line, the feet that lag,
The burning banner, and returning homewards,
The pallid faces and the bleeding flag !



BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

From house to house the mournful winds have
blown

The dying war-cry in the watchers' ears,
From heath to hill have borne the weepers' moan,
Have drowned the drum, have frozen up their
tears.

They see the dusty roads of separation,
They see the lonely seas and stranger lands :
Their children give good bodies for the nation
And yield their swords to death with loyal hands.

Beggar and prince in meeting face to face
Hold the same secret shining in their eyes—
The awful terror of a fierce disgrace,
The awful hope that glory may arise,

The hope that like a flame from the black field
Flings up its prophecy on fervent wings ;
Pride in the strength of God whose sword we
wield,
And charity the only crown of kings.

Iris Tree.

FALSE GODS

Gods of Berserker and Viking, Thor and Odin, rise
again ;

Loki laughs to see the Red Cock crowing from the
cross-crowned fane.

Steely-crested waves of battle, breaking into crimson
foam,

Drench with blood the smiling cornland, drown in
tears the happy home.

Where is resting-place or refuge from the fear that
compasseth,

When the heavens drop destruction, and the seas
are sown with death ?

For the sons of Light are fallen, fall'n thro' pride, as
angels fell,

And the Morning-star becometh Lucifer, the Prince
of Hell.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

To the false gods of thy fathers bend in vain thy
recreant knee !

They who smote Napoleon's legions will not flinch
for thine or thee.

Now of forty years of iron Europe sees thro' tears
the end.

As a foe we fear no longer though we feared thee
as a friend.

Often have we half-believed thee, fain to grasp the
grisly hand

Glove-enwrapped, that hid Death's fingers—trust the
mask-face smiling bland.

Fallen is that mask for ever—full revealed the felon
head,

And the proud-winged Prussian eagle prov'n a
vulture, carrion-fed.

As the Day of Armageddon deadly shall the conflict
be.

Flesh is clothing—breath is quickening—the dry
bones of chivalry.

Arthur rides again to battle ; there is Galahad the
pure ;

Loyal Lancelot, gallant Gawain, fight with us. The
End is sure.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Sure the victory. Else how vain-imagined are
millennial years—

Love victorious—Truth triumphant—stayed the flow
of helpless tears !

Sure the End is. Else Eternal Love must come
again to die ;

Peter shall forswear, and Judas kiss, and Pilate
crucify.

F. W. Bourdillon.

HISTORICAL

A SECOND REVIEW OF THE GRAND ARMY

I READ last night of the grand review
In Washington's chiefest avenue,—
Two hundred thousand men in blue,
I think they said was the number,—
Till I seemed to hear their trampling feet,
The bugle blast and the drum's quick beat,
The clatter of hoofs in the stony street,
The cheers of people who came to greet,
And the thousand details that to repeat

Would only my verse encumber,—
Till I fell in a reverie, sad and sweet,
And then to a fitful slumber.

When, lo ! in a vision I seemed to stand
In the lonely Capitol. On each hand
Far stretched the portico, dim and grand
Its columns ranged like a martial band
Of sheeted spectres, whom some command
Had called to a last reviewing.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And the streets of the city were white and bare;
No footfall echoed across the square ;
But out of the misty midnight air
I heard in the distance a trumpet blare,
And the wandering night-winds seemed to bear
The sound of a far tattooing.

Then I held my breath with fear and dread ;
For into the square, with a brazen tread,
There rode a figure whose stately head
O'erlooked the review that morning,
That never bowed from its firm-set seat
When the living column passed its feet,
Yet now rode steadily up the street
To the phantom bugle's warning.

Till it reached the Capitol square, and wheeled,
And there in the moonlight stood revealed
A well-known form that in State and field
Had led our patriot sires :
Whose face was turned to the sleeping camp,
Afar through the river's fog and damp,
That showed no flicker, nor wan ing lamp,
Nor wasted bivouac fires.

And I saw a phantom army come,
With never a sound of fife or drum,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

But keeping time to a throbbing hum
Of wailing and lamentation :
The martyred heroes of Malvern Hill,
Of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville,
The men whose wasted figures fill
The patriot graves of the nation.

And there came the nameless dead,—the men
Who perished in fever swamp and fen,
The slowly-starved of the prison pen ;
And, marching beside the others,
Came the dusky martyrs of Pillow's fight,
With limbs enfranchised and bearing bright ;
I thought—perhaps 'twas the pale moonlight—
They looked as white as their brothers !

And so all night marched the nation's dead,
With never a banner above them spread,
Nor a badge, nor a motto brandishèd ;
No mark—save the bare uncovered head
Of the silent bronze Reviewer ;
With never an arch save the vaulted sky ;
With never a flower save those that lie
On the distant graves—for love could buy
No gift that was purer or truer.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

So all night long swept the strange array,
So all night long till the morning gray
I watched for one who had passed away,
 With a reverent awe and wonder,—
Till a blue cap waved in the length'ning line,
And I knew that one who was kin of mine
Had come ; and I spake—and lo ! that sign
 Awakened me from my slumber.

Bret Harte.

RELIEVING GUARD

T. S. K. OBIT MARCH 4, 1864

CAME the relief. "What, sentry, ho !
How passed the night through thy long waking?"
"Cold, cheerless, dark,—as may befit
The hour before the dawn is breaking."

"No sight? no sound?" "No ; nothing save
The plover from the marshes calling,
And in yon western sky, about
An hour ago, a star was falling."

"A star? There's nothing strange in that."
"No, nothing ; but, above the thicket,
Somehow it seemed to me that God
Somewhere had just relieved a picket."

Bret Harte.

OUR PRIVILEGE

Not ours, where battle smoke upcurls,
And battle dews lie wet,
To meet the charge that treason hurls
By sword and bayonet.

Not ours to guide the fatal scythe
The fleshless Reaper wields ;
The harvest moon looks calmly down
Upon our peaceful fields.

The long grass dimples on the hill,
The pines sing by the sea,
And Plenty, from her golden horn,
Is pouring far and free.

O brothers by the farther sea !
Think still our faith is warm ;
The same bright flag above us waves
That swathed our baby form.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The same red blood that dyes your fields
Here throbs in patriot pride—
The blood that flowed when Lander fell,
And Baker's crimson tide.

And thus apart our hearts keep time
With every pulse ye feel,
And Mercy's ringing gold shall chime
With Valour's clashing steel.

Bret Harte.

THE REVEILLE

HARK ! I hear the tramp of thousands,
And of armèd men the hum ;
Lo ! a nation's hosts have gathered
Round the quick alarming drum,—
Saying, “ Come,
Freemen, come !

Ere your heritage be wasted,” said the quick
alarming drum.

“ Let me of my heart take counsel :
War is not of life the sum ;
Who shall stay and reap the harvest
When the autumn days shall come ? ”
But the drum
Echoed, “ Come !

Death shall reap the braver harvest,” said the
solemn-sounding drum.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“But when won the coming battle,
What of profit springs therefrom ?
What if conquest, subjugation,
Even greater ills become ?”

But the drum

Answered, “Come !

You must do the sum to prove it,” said the Yankee-
answering drum.

“What if, 'mid the cannons' thunder,
Whistling shot and bursting bomb,
When my brothers fall around me,
Should my heart grow cold and numb ?”

But the drum

Answered, “Come !

Better there in death united, than in life a recreant,—
Come !”

Thus they answered,—hoping, fearing,
Some in faith, and doubting some,
Till a trumpet-voice proclaiming,
Said, “My chosen people, come !”

Then the drum,

Lo ! was dumb,

For the great heart of the nation, throbbing, an-
swered, “Lord, we come !”

Bret Harte.



“HOW ARE YOU, SANITARY?”

Down the picket-guarded lane
 Rolled the comfort-laden wain,
Cheered by shouts that shook the plain,
 Soldier-like and merry :
Phrases such as camps may teach,
 Sabre-cuts of Saxon speech,
Such as “Bully !” “Them’s the peach !”
 “Wade in, Sanitary !”

Right and left the caissons drew
As the car went lumbering through,
Quick succeeding in review
 Squadrons military ;
Sunburnt men with beards like frieze,
Smooth-faced boys, and cries like these,—
“U. S. San. Com.” “That’s the cheese !”
 “Pass in, Sanitary !”

In such cheer it struggled on
Till the battle front was won,
Then the car, its journey done,
 Lo ! was stationary ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And where bullets whistling fly,
Came the sadder, fainter cry,
“ Help us, brothers, ere we die,—
Save us, Sanitary !”

Such the work. The phantom flies,
Wrapped in battle clouds that rise ;
But the brave—whose dying eyes,
Veiled and visionary,
See the jasper gate swung wide,
See the parted throng outside—
Hears the voice to those who ride :
“ Pass in, Sanitary !”

Bret Harte.

THE AGED STRANGER

“I was with Grant—” the stranger said ;
Said the farmer, “Say no more,
But rest thee here at my cottage porch,
For thy feet are weary and sore.”

“I was with Grant—” the stranger said ;
Said the farmer, “Nay, no more,—
I prithee sit at my frugal board,
And eat of my humble store.

“How fares my boy,—my soldier boy,
Of the old Ninth Army Corps ?
I warrant he bore him gallantly
In the smoke and the battle’s roar !”

“I know him not,” said the aged man,
“And, as I remarked before,
I was with Grant—” “Nay, nay, I know,”
Said the farmer, “say no more :

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“ He fell in battle,—I see, alas !
Thou’dst smooth these tidings o’er,—
Nay, speak the truth, whatever it be,
Though it rend my bosom’s core.

“ How fell he ?—with his face to the foe,
Upholding the flag he bore ?
Oh, say not that my boy disgraced
The uniform that he wore !”

“ I cannot tell,” said the aged man,
“ And should have remarked before,
That I was with Grant,—in Illinois,—
Some three years before the war.”

Then the farmer spake him never a word,
But beat with his fist full sore
That aged man, who had worked for Grant
Some three years before the war.

Bret Harte.

JOHN BURNS OF GETTYSBURG

HAVE you heard the story that gossips tell
Of Burns of Gettysburg?—No? Ah, well:
Brief is the glory that hero earns,
Briefer the story of poor John Burns:
He was the fellow who won renown,—
The only man who didn't back down
When the rebels rode through his native town:
But held his own in the fight next day,
When all his townsfolk ran away.
That was in July sixty-three,
The very day that General Lee,
Flower of Southern chivalry,
Baffled and beaten, backward reeled
From a stubborn Meade and a barren field.

I might tell how but the day before
John Burns stood at his cottage door,
Looking down the village street,
Where, in the shade of his peaceful vine,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

He heard the low of his gathered kine,
And felt their breath with incense sweet ;
Or I might say, when the sunset burned
The old farm gable, he thought it turned
The milk that fell like a babbling flood
Into the milk-pail red as blood !

Or how he fancied the hum of bees
Were bullets buzzing among the trees.
But all such fanciful thoughts as these
Were strange to a practical man like Burns,
Who minded only his own concerns,
Troubled no more by fancies fine
Than one of his calm-eyed, long-tailed kine,—
Quite old-fashioned and matter-of-fact,
Slow to argue, but quick to act.
That was the reason, as some folk say,
He fought so well on that terrible day.

And it was terrible. On the right
Raged for hours the heady fight,
Thundered the battery's double bass,—
Difficult music for men to face ;
While on the left—where now the graves
Undulate like the living waves
That all that day unceasing swept
Up to the pits the rebels kept—

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Round shot ploughed the upland glades,
Sown with bullets, reaped with blades ;
Shattered fences here and there
Tossed their splinters in the air ;
The very trees were stripped and bare ;
The barns that once held yellow grain
Were heaped with harvests of the slain ;
The cattle bellowed on the plain,
The turkeys screamed with might and main,
And brooding barn-fowl left their rest
With strange shells bursting in each nest.

Just where the tide of battle turns,
Erect and lonely stood old John Burns.
How do you think the man was dressed ?
He wore an ancient long buff vest,
Yellow as saffron,—but his best ;
And, buttoned over his manly breast,
Was a bright blue coat, with a rolling collar,
And large gilt buttons,—size of a dollar,—
With tails that the country-folk called “swaller.”
He wore a broad-brimmed, bell-crowned hat,
White as the locks on which it sat.
Never had such a sight been seen
For forty years on the village green,
Since old John Burns was a country beau,
And went to the “quiltings” long ago.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Close at his elbows all that day,
Veterans of the Peninsula,
Sunburnt and bearded, charged away ;
And striplings, downy of lip and chin,—
Clerks that the Home Guard mustered in,—
Glanced, as they passed, at the hat he wore,
Then at the rifle his right hand bore :
And hailed him, from out their youthful lore,
With scraps of a slangy *repertoire* :
“How are you, White Hat !” “Put her through !”
“Your head’s level !” and “Bully for you !”
Called him “Daddy,”—begged he’d disclose
The name of the tailor who made his clothes,
And what was the value he set on those ;
While Burns, unmindful of jeer and scoff,
Stood there picking the rebels off,—
With his long brown rifle and bell-crown hat,
And the swallow-tails they were laughing at.

’Twas but a moment, for that respect
Which clothes all courage their voices checked ;
And something the wildest could understand
Spake in the old man’s strong right hand,
And his corded throat, and the lurking frown
Of his eyebrows under his old bell-crown ;
Until, as they gazed, there crept an awe
Through the ranks in whispers, and some men saw,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

In the antique vestments and long white hair,
The Past of the Nation in battle there ;
And some of the soldiers since declare
That the gleam of his old white hat afar,
Like the crested plume of the brave Navarre,
That day was their oriflamme of war.

So raged the battle. You know the rest :
How the rebels, beaten and backward pressed,
Broke at the final charge and ran.
At which John Burns—a practical man—
Shouldered his rifle, unbent his brows.
And then went back to his bees and cows.

That is the story of old John Burns ;
This is the moral the reader learns :
In fighting the battle, the question's whether
You'll show a hat that's white, or a feather !

Bret Harte.

DRUM-TAPS

FIRST O SONGS FOR A PRELUDE

FIRST O songs for a prelude,
Lightly strike on the stretch'd tympanum pride
and joy in my city,
How she led the rest to arms, how she gave the
cue,
How at once with lithe limb unwaiting a moment
she sprang,
(O superb ! O Manhattan, my own, my peerless !
O strongest you in the hour of danger, in crisis !
 O truer than steel !)
How you sprang—how you threw off the costumes
of peace with indifferent hand,
How your soft opera-music changed, and the drum
and fife were heard in their stead,
How you led to the war (that shall serve for our
prelude, song of soldiers),
How Manhattan drum-taps led.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Forty years had I in my city seen soldiers parading,

Forty years as a pageant, till unawares the lady of this teeming and turbulent city,

Sleepless amid her ships, her houses, her incalculable wealth,

With her million children around her, suddenly

At dead of night, at news from the south,

Incens'd struck with clinch'd hand the pavement.

A shock electric, the night sustain'd it,

Till with ominous hum our hive at daybreak pour'd out its myriads

From the houses then and the workshops, and through all the doorways

Leapt the tumultous, and lo ! Manhattan arming.

To the drum-taps prompt,

The young men falling in and arming,

The mechanics arming (the trowel, the jack-plane, the blacksmith's hammer, tost aside with precipitation).

The lawyer leaving his office and arming, the judge leaving the court,

The driver deserting his wagon in the street, jumping down, throwing the reins abruptly down on the horses' backs,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The salesman leaving the store, the boss, the
book-keeper, porter, all leaving ;

Squads gather everywhere by common consent
and arm,

The new recruits, even boys, the old men show
them how to wear their accoutrements, they
buckle the straps carefully.

Outdoors arming, indoors arming, the flash of the
musket-barrels,

The white tents cluster in camps, the arm'd
sentries around, the sunrise cannon and again
at sunset

Arm'd regiments arrive every day, pass through
the city, and embark from the wharves,

(How good they look as they tramp down to the
river, sweaty with their guns on their shoulders !

How I love them ! how I could hug them, with
their brown faces and their clothes and
knapsacks cover'd with dust !)

The blood of the city up—arm'd ! arm'd ! the cry
everywhere, the flags flung out from the
steeples of churches and from all the public
buildings and stores,

The tearful parting, the mother kisses her son, the
son kisses his mother,

(Loath is the mother to part, yet not a word does
she speak to detain him)

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The tumultuous escort, the ranks of policemen preceding clearing the way,
The unspent enthusiasm, the wild cheers of the crowd for their favourites,
The artillery, the silent cannons bright as gold, drawn along, rumble lightly over the stones,
(Silent cannons, soon to cease your silence, Soon unlimber'd to begin the red business);
All the mutter of reparation, all the determin'd arming,
The hospital service, the lint, bandages and medicines,
The women volunteering for nurses, the work begun for in earnest, no mere parade now;
War! an arm'd race is advancing! the welcome for battle, no turning away;
War! be it weeks, months, or years, an arm'd race is advancing to welcome it.
Manahatta a-march—and it's O to sing it well!
It's O for a manly life in the camp.

And the sturdy artillery,
The guns bright as gold, the work for giants, to serve well the guns,
Unlimber them! (no more as the past forty years for salutes, for courtesies merely,
Put in something now besides powder and wadding.)

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And you lady of ships, you Manahatta,
Old matron of this proud, friendly, turbulent city,
Often in peace and wealth you were pensive or
covertly frown'd amid all your children,
But now you smile with joy, exulting old
Manahatta.

Walt Whitman.

EIGHTEEN SIXTY-ONE

ARM'D year—year of the struggle,
No dainty rhymes or sentimental love verses for
you, terrible year,
Not you as some pale poetling seated at a desk
lispings cadenzas piano,
But as a strong man erect, clothed in blue clothes,
advancing, carrying a rifle on your shoulder,
With well-gristled body and sunburnt face and
hands, with a knife in the belt at your side,
As I heard you shouting loud, your sonorous voice
ringing across the continent,
Your masculine voice, O year, as rising amid the
great cities,
Amid the men of Manhattan I saw you as one of
the workmen and dwellers in Manhattan,
Or with large steps crossing the prairies out of
Illinois and Indiana,
Rapidly crossing the West with springy gait and
descending the Alleghanies,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Or down from the Great Lakes or in Pennsylvania
or on deck along the Ohio river,
Or southward along the Tennessee or Cumberland
rivers, or at Chattanooga on the mountain-top,
Saw I your gait and saw I your sinewy limbs
clothed in blue, bearing weapons, robust year,
Heard your determin'd voice launched forth again
and again,
Year that suddenly sang by the mouths of the
round-lipp'd cannon,
I repeat you, hurrying, crashing, sad, distracted year.

Walt Whitman.

AS I LAY WITH MY HEAD IN YOUR
LAP, CAMERADO

As I lay with my head in your lap, camerado,
The confession I made I resume, what I said to you
and the open air I resume,
I know I am restless and make others so,
I know my words are weapons full of danger, full
of death,
For I confront peace, security, and all the settled
laws, to unsettle them,
I am more resolute because all have denied me than
I could ever have been had all accepted me,
I heed not and have never heeded either experience
cautions, majorities, nor ridicule,
And the threat of what is call'd hell is little or
nothing to me,
And the lure of what is call'd heaven is little or
nothing to me,
Dear camerado ! I confess I have urged you onward
with me and still urge you, without the least idea
of what is our destination,
Or whether we shall be victorious, or utterly quell'd
and defeated.

Walt Whitman.

HOW SOLEMN AS ONE BY ONE

How solemn as one by one,
As the ranks returning worn and sweaty, as the men
 file by where I stand,
As the faces the masks appear, as I glance at the
 faces studying the masks,
(As I glance upward out of this page studying you,
 dear friend (whoever you are)
How solemn the thought of my whispering soul to
 each in the ranks, and to you,
I see behind each mask that wonder a kindred soul,
O the bullet could never kill what you really are,
 dear friend,
Nor the bayonet stab what you really are ;
The soul ! yourself I see, great as any, good as the
 best,
Waiting secure and content, which the bullet could
 never kill,
Nor the bayonet stab, O friend.

Walt Whitman.

THE ARTILLERYMAN'S VISION

WHILE my wife at my side lies slumbering and the
wars are over long,
And my head on the pillow rests at home, and the
vacant mid-night passes,
And through the stillness, through the dark, I hear,
 just hear, the breath of my infant,
There in the room as I wake from sleep this vision
 presses upon me :
The engagement opens there and then in fantasy
 unreal,
The skirmishers begin, they crawl cautiously ahead,
 I hear the irregular snap ! snap !
I hear the sound of the different missiles, the short
 t-h-t ! t-h-t ! of the rifle balls,
I see the shells exploding leaving small white clouds,
 I hear the great shells shrieking as they pass,
The grape like the hum and whirr of wind through
 the trees (tumultuous now the contest rages),
All the scenes at the batteries rise in detail before
 me again,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The crashing and smoking, the pride of the men in
their pieces,

The chief-gunner ranges and sights his piece and
selects a fuse of the right time,

After firing I see him lean aside and look eagerly
off to note the effect ;

Elsewhere I hear the cry of a regiment charging
(the young colonel leads himself this time with
brandish'd sword)

I see the gaps cut by the enemy's volley (quickly fill'd
up, no delay)

I breathe the suffocating smoke, then the flat clouds
hover low concealing all ;

Now a strange lull for a few seconds, not a shot fired
on either side,

Then resumed the chaos louder than ever with eager
calls and orders of officers,

While from some distant part of the field the wind
wafts to my ears a shout of applause (some
special success)

And ever the sound of the cannon far or near
(rousing even in dreams a devilish exultation
and all the old mad joy in the depths of my
soul).

And ever the hastening of infantry shifting
positions, batteries, cavalry, moving hither and
thither.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The falling, dying, I heed not, the wounded dripping
and red I heed not, some to the rear are hob-
bling)

Grime, heat, rush, aide-de-camps galloping by or on
a full run

With the patter of small arms, the warning s-s-t of
the rifles (these in my vision I hear or see)
And bombs bursting in air, and at night the vari'-
colour'd rockets.

Walt Whitman.

VIGIL STRANGE I KEPT ON THE FIELD
ONE NIGHT

VIGIL strange I kept on the field one night ;
When you, my son and my comrade, dropt at my
side that day,
One look I but gave which your dear eyes return'd
with a look I shall never forget,
One touch of your hand to mine, O boy, reach'd
up as you lay on the ground,
Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-
contested battle,
Till late in the night reliev'd to the place at last
again I made my way,
Found you in death so cold, dear comrade, found
your body, son of responding kisses (never
again on earth responding)
Bared your face in the starlight, curious the scene,
cool blew the moderate night-wind,
Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly
around me the battlefield spreading,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Vigil wondrous and vigil sweet there in the fragrant silent night,
But not a tear fell, not even a long-drawn sigh,
long, long I gazed,
Then on the earth partially reclining sat by your side leaning my chin in my hands,
Passing sweet hours, immortal and mystic hours with you, dearest comrade—not a tear, not a word,
Vigil of silence, love and death, vigil for you, my son and my soldier,
As onward sliently stars aloft, eastward new ones upward stole,
Vigil final for you, brave boy (I could not save you, swift was your death,
I faithfully loved you and cared for you living, I think we shall surely meet again)
Till at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the dawn appear'd,
My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his form,
Folded the blanket well, tucking it carefully over head and carefully under feet,
And there and then and bathes by the rising sun, my son in his grave, in his rude-dug grave I deposited,
Ending my vigil strange with that, vigil of night and battlefield dim,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Vigil for boy of responding kisses (never again on earth responding)

Vigil for comrade swiftly slain, vigil I never forget,
how as day brighten'd,

I rose from the chill ground and folded my soldier
well in his blanket.

And buried him where he fell.

Walt Whitman.

BY THE BIVOUAC'S FITFUL FLAME

By the bivouac's fitful flame,
A procession winding around me, solemn, and
sweet, and slow—but first I note,
The tents of the sleeping army, the fields' and
woods' dim outline,
The darkness lit by spots of kindled fire, the
silence
Like a phantom far or near an occasional figure
moving,
The shrubs and trees (as I lift my eyes they seem
to be stealthily watching me)
While wind in procession thoughts, O tender and
wondrous thoughts
Of life and death, of home and the past and loved,
and of those that are far away;
A solemn and slow procession there as I sit on the
ground,
By the bivouac's fitful flame.

Walt Whitman.

AN ARMY CORPS ON THE MARCH

With its cloud of skirmishers in advance,
With now the sound of a single shot snapping like
 a whip, and now an irregular volley,
The swarming ranks press on and on, the dense
 brigades press on,
Glittering dimly, toiling under the sun—the dust-
 cover'd men,
In columns rise and fall to the undulations of the
 ground,
With artillery interspers'd—the wheels rumble, the
 horses sweat,
As the army corps advances.

Walt Whitman.

BIVOUAC ON A MOUNTAIN SIDE.

I SEE before me now a travelling army halting,
Below a fertile valley spread, with barns and
orchards of summer,
Behind the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt,
 in places rising high,
Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall
 shapes dingly seen,
The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far,
 some away up on the mountain,
The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming,
 large-sized, flickering,
And over all the sky—the sky ! far, far out of reach,
 studded, breaking out, the eternal stars.

Walt Whitman.

CAVALRY CROSSING A FORD

A LINE in long array where they wind betwixt green islands,

They take a serpentine course, their arms flash in the sun—hark to the musical clank,

Behold the silvery river, in it the splashing horses loitering stop to drink,

Behold the brown-faced men, each group, each person a picture, the negligent rest on the saddles,

Some emerge on the opposite bank, others are just entering the ford—while,

Scarlet and blue and snowy white,

The guidon flags flutter gaily in the wind.

Walt Whitman.

BEAT ! BEAT ! DRUMS !

BEAT ! beat ! drums !—blow ! bugles ! blow !
Through the windows—through doors, burst like a
ruthless force,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congrega-
tion,
Into the school where the scholar is studying ;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must
he have now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his
field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound your drums—so
shrill you bugles blow.

Beat ! beat ! drums !—blow ! bugles ! blow !
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels
in the streets ;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the
houses ? no sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or
speculators would they continue ?

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Would the talkers be talking? would the singer
attempt to sing?

Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his
case before the judge?

Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles
wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or
prayer,

Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's
entreaties,

Make even the trestles to shake the dead where
they lie awaiting the hearses,

So strong you thump, O terrible drums—so loud
you bugles blow.

Walt Whitman.

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW

PIPES of the misty moorlands,
Voice of the glens and hills,
The droning of the torrents,
The treble of the rills !
Not the braes of broom and heather,
Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
Have heard your sweetest strain !

Dear to the Lowland reaper
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
The Scottish pipes are dear,—
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch
O'er mountain, loch, and glade ;
But the sweetest of all music
The Pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
Louder yelled, and nearer crept ;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
Near and nearer circles swept.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—
Pray to-day,” the soldier said ;
“To-morrow, death’s between us
And the wrong and shame we dread.”

O, they listened, looked, and waited,
Till their hope became despair ;
And the sobs of low bewailing
Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground :
“Dinna ye hear it ?—dinna ye hear it ?
The Pipes of Havelock sound !”

Hushed the wounded man his groaning ;
Hushed the wife her little ones ;
Alone they heard the drum-roll
And the roar of Sepoy guns.
But to sounds of home and childhood
The Highland ear was true ;—
As her mother’s cradle-crooning
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

She knew the droning pibroch
She knew the Campbell's call :
"Hark ! hear ye no' MacGregor's,—
The grandest o' them all !"

O, they listened, dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last ;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
Rose and fell the piper's blast !
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's :
"God be praised !—the march of Havelock !
The piping of the clans !"

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call
Stinging all the air to life.
But when the far-off dust-cloud
To plaided legions grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew !

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
The air of Auld Lang Syne.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
Rose that sweet and homelike strain ;
And the tartan clove the turban,
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch
O'er mountain, glen, and glade
But the sweetest of all music
The Pipes at Lucknow played.

J. G. Whittier.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

HALF a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
“Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !” he said :
Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

“Forward, the Light Brigade !”
Was there a man dismay’d ?
Not tho’ the soldier knew
 Some one had blunder’d :
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die :
Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
 Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell,
 Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
 All the world wonder'd :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them,
 Volley'd and thunder'd :

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

Tennyson.

ST. FIOMENA

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls,
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honour to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low !

Thus, thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
The trenches cold and damp,
The starved and frozen camp.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,
The cheerless corridors,
The cold and stony floors.

Lo ! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see,
Pass through the glimmering gloom
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly
The vision came and went,
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its ray shall cast
From portals of the past.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall she be wanting here
The palm, the lily, and the spear,
The symbols that of yore,
Saint Filomena bore.

Henry W. Longfellow.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

Of Nelson and the North,
Sing the glorious days renown,
When to the battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone ;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold, determined hand,
And the prince of all the land,
Led them on.

Like Leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew,
On the lofty British line.
It was ten of April morn by the chime ;
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death ;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene ;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captain cried : when each
 gun,
From its adamantine lips,
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
 Of the sun.

Again ! again ! again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feebler cheer the Dane,
To our cheering sent us back :—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom :—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail ;
Or, in conflagration pale,
 Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave :
"Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
And we conquer but to save ;—
So peace instead of death let us bring ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."

Then Denmark blessed our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose ;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day ;
While the sun looked shining bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise !
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died
With the gallant good Riou ;
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave !
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !

Thomas Campbell.

WATERLOO

STOP!—for thy tread is on an empire's dust,
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None: but the moral's truth tells simpler so.
As the ground was before, thus let it be;
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world hath gained by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making
victory?

There was sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave
men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose, with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;—
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a
rising knell!

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Did ye not hear it? No, 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street:
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined—
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But hark! that heavy sound breaks in once
more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is! it is! the cannon's opening
roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high call
Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting,
fell!

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out the young hearts, and choking
sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated ! Who could guess
If evermore should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could
rise !

And there was mounting in hot haste ; the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal, afar ;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier, ere the morning star ;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips—"The foe ! They
come, they come !"

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering
rose—
The war note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard—and heard too have her Saxon foes—
How in the noon of night that pilbroch thrills,
Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring, which instils

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The stirring memory of a thousand years ;
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clans-
man's ears !

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass
Grieving—if aught inanimate e'er grieves—
Over the unreturning brave—alas !
E'er evening to be trodden like the grass,
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure ; when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold
and low !

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay ;
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife ;
The morn the marshalling in arms ; the day
Battle's magnificently stern array !
The thunder clouds close o'er it, which when
rent,
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe—in one red burial
blent !

Lord Byron.

THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA, 1812-13

I

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
A fond reflection of her own decay,
Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,
Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen day,
In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,
As though his weakness were disturbed by pain :
Or, if a juster fancy should allow
An undisputed symbol of command,
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,
Infirmly grasped within a palsied hand.
These emblems suit the helpless and forlorn ;
But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was—dread Winter ! who beset,
Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,
That host, when from the regions of the Pole
They shrunk, insane ambition's barren goal—

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied
Their God, and placed their trust in human pride !
As fathers persecute rebellious sons,
He smote the blossoms of their warrior youth ;
He called on Frost's inexorable tooth
Life to consume in Manhood's firmest hold ;
Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs ;
For why—unless for liberty enrolled
And sacred home—ah ! why should hoary Age be
bold ?

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,
But fleeter far the pinions of the Wind,
Which from Siberian caves the Monarch freed,
And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,
And bade the Snow their ample backs bestride,
And to the battle ride.

No pitying voice commands a halt,
No courage can repel the dire assault ;
Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and blind,
Whole legions sink—and, in one instant, find
Burial and death : look for them—and descry,
When morn returns, beneath the clear blue sky,
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy !

II

YE Storms, resound the praises of your King !
And ye mild Seasons—in a sunny clime,
Midway on some high hill, while father Time
Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,
And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing !
Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and fruits, and
flowers,
Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety showers,
And the dire flapping of his hoary wing !
Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green grass ;
With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report your
gain ;
Whisper it to the billows of the main,
And to the aërial zephyrs as they pass,
That old decrepit Winter—*He* hath slain
That Host, which rendered all your bounties vain !

III

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze
Of dreadful sacrifice ; by Russian blood
Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood ;
The unfeeling Elements no claim shall raise
To rob our Human-nature of just praise

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

For what she did and suffered. Pledges sure
Of a deliverance absolute and pure
She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten ways
Of Providence. But now did the Most High
Exalt his still small voice ;—to quell that Host
Gathered his power, a manifest ally ;
He, whose heaped waves confounded the proud
boast :
Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and Frost,
“Finish the strife by deadliest victory !”

(1816)

William Wordsworth.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun ;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
That he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found ;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by ;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
" Who fell in the great victory.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“I find them in my garden, for
There’s many hereabout ;
And often when I go to plough ;
The ploughshare turns them out,
For many thousand men,” said he,
“Were slain in that great victory.”

“Now tell us what ’twas all about,”
Young Peterkin, he cries,
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes ;
“Now tell us all about the war,
And what they killed each other for ?”

“It was the English,” Kaspar cried,
“Who put the French to rout ;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out.
But everybody said,” quoth he,
“That ’twas a famous victory.

“My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by ;
They burned his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly ;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide ;
And many a tender mother then,
And new-born baby, died ;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

“They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won,
For many thousand soldiers there
Lay rotting in the sun ;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

“Great praise the Duke of Marlborough won,
And our good Prince Eugene.”
“Why, 'twas a very wicked thing ! ”
Said little Wilhemine.
“Nay nay, my little girl”—quoth he,
“It was a famous victory.

“And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win,”
“But what good came of it at last ? ”
Quoth little Peterkin.
“Why, that I cannot tell,” said he ;
“But 'twas a famous victory.”

Southey.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the ramparts we hurried ;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot,
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeams' misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him ;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow ;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his
head,
And we far away on the billow !

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him ;
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on,
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour of retiring !
And we heard the distant and random gun,
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe.

THE BATTLE OF HOHENLINDEN

ON Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with plunder riven ;
Then rushed the steed to battle driven ;
And, louder than the bolts of heaven,
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow,
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war clouds' rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave !
Wave, Munich ! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry.

Few, few shall part where many meet !
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet,
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell.

FLODDEN

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast :
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears ;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave ;
But nought distinct they see ;
Wide raged the battle on the plain ;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain ;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;
Crests rose, and stoop'd and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight ;
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Highlandman,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntly, and with Home.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain :—But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell ;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky !
A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry ;
Loud were the clanging blows ;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The pennon sunk and rose ;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It waver'd mid the foes.

No longer Blount the view could bear :
"By Heaven, and all its saints ! I swear,
I will not see it lost !

Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."

And to the fray he rode amain,
Follow'd by all the archer train,
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—

The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.

Then Eustace mounted too :—yet staid
As loath to leave the helpless maid,

When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,

Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by ;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone :
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels ;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone.
The scatter'd van of England wheels :—
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roar'd, “Is Wilton there ?”—
They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
Fight but to die,—“Is Wilton there ?”
With that, straight up the hill they rode
Two horsemen drench'd with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strain'd the broken brand ;
His arms were smear'd with blood and sand.
Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said—“By Saint George, he's gone

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head !

Good-night to Marmion."—

"Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling cease ;
He opes his eyes," said Eustace ; " peace !"

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare :—
"Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace where ?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !
Redeem my pennon,—charge again !
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue !'—Vain !
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again !
Yet my last thought is England's,—fly,
To Dacre bear my signet-ring ;
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie ;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield
Edmund is down :—my life is rest ;
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—

Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets! fly!
Leave Marmion here alone—to die.”
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmur’d,—“Is there none,
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst!”

O, Woman! in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the Baron’s casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stoop’d her by the runnel’s side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain’s side,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn?—behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
“Drink, weary pilgrim, drink, and pray
For the kind soul of Sybil Grey,
Who built this cross and well.”
She fill’d the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A Monk supporting Marmion’s head:
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And, as she stoop’d his brow to lave—
“Is it the hand of Clare,” he said,
“Or injured Constance, bathes my head?”
Then, as remembrance rose,—
“Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!”—

“Alas!” she said, “the while,—
O, think of your immortal weal !
In vain for Constance is your zeal ;
She——died at Holy Isle.”—
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound ;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
“Then it was truth,” he said—“I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day !
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar-stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be !—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder’s lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand !
A sinful heart makes feeble hand.”
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling Monk.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch the gushing wound ;
The Monk, with unvailing cares,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Exhausted all the Church's prayers
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear,
For that she ever sung,
"In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the
dying!"

So the notes rung ;—
"Avoid thee, Fiend !—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand !—
O, look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine :
O, think on faith and bliss !—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."—
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,
And—STANLEY ! was the cry ;
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye ;
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory !—
Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley, on !'
Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their King,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing,

Where Huntly, and where Home?—
O, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Roland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!

Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,

While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!

In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
“O, Lady,” cried the Monk, “away!”

And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair,
Of Tillmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent 'in prayer,

And at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;
Front, flank, and rear, and squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.

But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring ;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard flight ;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well ;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know ;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land ;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail,
Tradition, legend, tune and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong :
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield !

Sir Walter Scott.

ON THE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose
bones

Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold ;
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones ;
Forget not : in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant ; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton.

NASEBY

Oh ! wherefore came ye forth, in triumph from the
North,

With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment
all red ?

And wherefore doth your rout sent forth a joyous
shout ?

And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which
ye tread ?

O evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we
trod,

For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and
the strong

Who sate in the high places and slew the saints
of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses
shine,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And the Man of Blood was there, with his long
essenced hair,

And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of
the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his
sword,

The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swell'd
into a shout

Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark ! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line,
For God ! for the Cause ! for the Church ! for the
Laws !

For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the
Rhine.

The furious German comes with his clarions and
his drums,

His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall,
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes,
close your ranks ;

For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

They are here ! They rush on ! We are broken !
We are gone !

Our left is borne before them like stubble on the
blast.

O Lord, put forth thy might, O Lord, defend the
right !

Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to
the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound, the centre hath given
ground.

Hark ! hark !—What means the trampling of horse-
men on our rear ?

Whose banners do I see, boys ? 'Tis he, thank
God, 'tis he, boys !

Bear up another minute : brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a
row,

Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on
the dykes,

Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the
Accurst,

And at a shock have scattered the forest of his
pikes.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Fast, fast, the gallants ride in some safe nook to
hide.

Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple
Bar.

And he—he turns, he flies ; shame on those cruel
eyes

That bore to look on torture, and dare not look
on war.

Ho ! comrades, scour the plain ; and, ere ye strip
the slain,

First give another stab to make your search
secure ;

Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-
pieces and lockets,

The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the
poor.

Fools ! your doubtlets shone with gold, and your
hearts were gay and bold,

When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans
to-day ;

And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers
in the rocks,

Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the
prey.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven
and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your
blades ;
Your perfum'd satin clothes, your catches and your
oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds
and your spades ?

Down, down for ever down with the mitre and
the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of
the Pope.
There is woe in Oxford Halls ; there is wail in
Durham's stalls ;
The Jesuit smites his bosom ; the Bishop rends his
cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's
ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of
England's sword ;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when
they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses
and the Word.

Lord Macaulay.

THE WINNING OF CALES

LONG the proud Spaniards had vaunted to conquer
us,

Threat'ning our country with fyer and sword ;
Often preparing their navy most sumptuous
With as great plenty as Spain could afford.
Dub a dub, dub a dub, this strike their drums ;
Tantara, tantara, the Englishman comes.

To the seas presentlye went our lord admiral,
With knights couragious and captains full good ;
The brave Earl of Essex, a prosperous general,
With him prepared to pass the salt flood.

At Plymouth speedilye, took they ship valiantlye,
Braver ships were never seen under sayle,
With their fair colours spread, and streamers o'er
their head,
Now, bragging Spaniards, take heed of your tayle.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Unto Cales cunninglye, came we most speedilye,
Where the kinges navy securelye did ryde ;
Being upon their banks, piercing their butt of sacks,
Ere any Spaniards our coming descryde.

Great was the crying, the running and ryding,
Which at that season was made in that place ;
The beacons were fyred, as need then required ;
To hyde their great treasure they had little space.

There you might see their ships, how they were
fyred fast,
And how their men drowned themselves in the
sea ;
There you might hear them cry, wayle and weep
piteously,
When they saw no shift to 'scape thence away.

The great *St. Philip*, the pryde of the Spaniards,
Was burnt to the bottom, and sunk in the sea,
But the *St. Andrew* and eke the *St. Matthew*,
Wee took in fight mansfullye and brought away.

The Earl of Essex, most valiant and hardye,
With horsemen and footmen march'd up to the
town ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The Spaniards which saw them, were greatly
alarmed,
Did fly for their savegard, and durst not come
down.

“Now,” quoth the noble Earl, “courage my soldiers
all,
Fight and be valiant, the spoil you shall have;
And be well rewarded all from the great to the
small;
But look that the women and children you save.”

The Spaniards at that sight, thinking it vain to
fight,
Hung up flags of truce and yielded the towne;
Wee marched in presentlye, decking the walls on
hye
With English colours which purchas'd renowne.

Entering the houses then, of the most richest men,
For gold and treasure we searched eche day;
In some places we did find, pyes baking left
behind,
Meate at fire roasting, and folkes run away.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Full of rich merchandise, every shop catch'd our eyes,
Damasks and sattens and velvets full fayre :
Which soldiers measur'd out by the length of their swords :
Of all commodities eche had a share.

Thus Cales was taken, and our brave general March'd to the market-place, where he did stand : There many prisoners fell to our several shares, Many crav'd mercye and mercye they fann'd.

When our brave general saw they delayed all,
And would not ransome their towne as they said,
With their fair wanscots, their presses and bedsteads,
Their joint-stools and tables a fire we made ;
And when the town burned all in a flame,
With tara, tantara, away we all came.

Anonymous.

IVRY

A SONG OF THE HUGUENOTS

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all
glories are !

And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of
Navarre !

Now let there be the merry sound of music and of
dance,

Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh
pleasant land of France !

And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city
of the waters,

Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourn-
ing daughters.

As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our
joy,

For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought
thy walls annoy.

Hurrah ! Hurrah ! a single field hath turned the
chance of war,

Hurrah ! Hurrah ! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Oh ! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array ;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land ;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand :
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood ;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The King is come to marshal us, in all his armour drest,
And he has bound a snow white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was
stern and high.

Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from
wing to wing,

Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save
our Lord the King!"

"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he
may,

For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst
the ranks of war,

And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah ! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled
din

Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring
culverin.

The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint André's
plain,

With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and
Almayne.

Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,

Charge for the golden lilies,—upon them with the
lance.

A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand
spears in rest,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

A thousand knights are pressing close behind the
snow-white crest ;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while like
a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of
Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne
hath turned his rein.

D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish
count is slain.

Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a
Biscay gale ;

The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags,
and cloven mail.

And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along
our van,

“Remember St. Bartholomew,” was passed from
man to man.

But out spake gentle Henry, “No Frenchman is my
foe :

Down, down with every foreigner, but let your
brethren go.”

Oh ! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or
in war,

As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier of
Navarre ?

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for
France to-day ;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a
prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in
fight ;
And the good Lord of Rosny has ta'en the cornet
white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath
ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of
false Lorraine.
Up with it high ; unfurl it wide ; that all the host
may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which
wrought His church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their
loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of
Navarre.

Ho ! maidens of Vienna ; Ho ! matrons of Lucerne ;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who
never shall return.
Ho ! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor
spearmen's souls.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Ho ! gallant nobles of the League, look that your
 arms be bright ;
Ho ! burghers of Saint Genevieve, keep watch and
 ward to-night.
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath
 raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the
 valour of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all
 glories are ;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of
 Navarre.

Lord Macaulay.

THE SPANISH ARMADO

SOME years of late, in eighty-eight,
As I do well remember,
It was, some say, the middle of May,
And some say in September.

The Spanish train launch'd forth amain,
With many a fine bravado,
Their (as they thought, but it prov'd not)
Invincible Armado,
Invincible Armado.

There was a man that dwelt in Spain
Who shot well with a gun a,
Don Pedro hight, as black as wight
As the Knight of the Sun, a,
As the Knight of the Sun a.

King Philip made him Admiral,
And bid him not to stay a,
But to destroy both man and boy
And so to come away a,
And so to come away a.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Their navy was well victualled
With bisket, pease and bacon,
They brought two ships, well fraught with whips
But I think they were mistaken,
 But I think they were mistaken.

Their men were young, munition strong,
And to do us more harm a,
They thought it meet to joyn their fleet
All with the Prince of Parma,
 All with the Prince of Parma.

They coasted round about our land,
And so came in by Dover ;
But we had men set on 'em then,
And threw the rascals over.
 And threw the rascals over.

The Queen was then at Tilbury,
What could we more desire a ?
Sir Francis Drake for her sweet sake
Did set them all on fire a,
 Did set them all on fire a.

Then straight they fled by sea and land,
That one man kill'd threescore a,
And had not they all run away,
On truth he had kill more a,
 In truth he had kill'd more a.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Then let them neither bray nor boast,
But if they come again a,
Let them take heed they do not speed
As they did you know when a,
As they did you know when a.

George Herbert.

THE ARMADA

A FRAGMENT

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise ;

I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in
ancient days,

When that great fleet invincible against her bore
in vain

The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of
Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer
day,

There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to
Plymouth Bay ;

Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond
Aurigny's isle,

At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many
a mile.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace :

And the tall *Pinta*, till the noon, had held her close in chase.

Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall ;

The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall ;

Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,

And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.

With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;

Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums ;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space ;

For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.

And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,

As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.

Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown, And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,

Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle shield.

So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,

And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.

Ho ! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight : ho ! scatter flowers, fair maids :

Ho ! gunners, fire a loud salute : ho ! gallants, draw your blades :

Thou sun, shine on her joyously ; ye breezes, waft her wide ;

Our glorious **SEMPER EADEM**, the banner of our pride.

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold ;

The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold ;

Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,

Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

That time of slumber was as bright and busy as
the day ;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone : it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each
southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves :
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves :
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew :
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton down ;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into
the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike
silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal
city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answer-
ing fires ;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
spires ;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud
the voice of fear ;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
louder cheer ;
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush
of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed
down each roaring street ;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder
still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came
spurring in :
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant
squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
bright couriers forth ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they
started for the north ;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they
bounded still :
All night from tower to tower they sprang ; they
sprang from hill to hill :
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills
of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the
boundless plain ;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln
sent
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale
of Trent ;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's
embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers
of Carlisle.

Lord Macaulay.

SONG OF THE TYROLESE AFTER THE
BATTLE OF BRIXEN

Oh ! the pause of silent dread
After rush of battles holy !
Lo ! the spirits of the dead
From the field are floating slowly ;
Dense the mist reeks, full of life
From the blood-hot place of strife,
But there's pride in the gasp of our conquerors
breath
Though their laurels be wreathed by the fingers
of Death.
There's a smile on the lip that is ceasing to quiver,
And a flash in the eye that is freezing for ever.

Beneath the sacred sod they lie on
Lay we our triumphant brave ;
This land they loved to live and die on,
And o'er their honourable grave
Shall blossoms burst of brilliant hue,
And softly shall distil the dew,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And mountain pines umbrageous darkly wave ;
The stars shall look down from the heaven
most brightly
Where the bones of the brave are, the moon
will watch nightly ;
Like the Alp that is reddest at set of the sun,
Brightest in death is the glory they've won,
Our shouting the hymn at their burial shall be—
Oh ! a soldier sleeps well in a land that is free !

Ruskin.

KING HENRY V. BEFORE HARFLEUR

ONCE more into the breach, dear friends, once
more ;
Or close the wall up with our English dead !
In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness, and humility :
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger ;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage ;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect ;
Let it pry through the portage of the head,
Like the brass cannon ; let the brow o'erwhelm it
As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide ;
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height. On, on, ye noblest English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof !

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument.
Dishonour not your mothers ; now attest
That those whom you call'd fathers did beget you !
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war !—And you, good
yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture ; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding ; which I doubt
not ;
For there is none of you so mean and base,
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start, The game's afoot :
Follow your spirit ; and, upon this charge,
Cry “God for Harry ! England ! and Saint George !”

Shakespeare.

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT

FAIR stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry.

But putting to the main,
At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnish'd in warlike sort,
March'd towards Agincourt
In happy hour ;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopp'd his way,
Where the French gen'ral lay,
With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide,
To the King sending ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile,
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazed.
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won,
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raised.

"And for myself," quoth he,
"This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

"Poictiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
No less our skill is,

Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat,
Lop'd the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread,
The eager vanguard led ;
With the main Henry sped,
Amongst his henchmen.
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there,
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen !

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder
That with cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which did the signal aim
To our hid forces :

When from a meadow by
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung
Piercing the weather ;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew,
Not one was tardy ;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
As to o'erwhelm it ;

And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Glo'ster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother ;
Clarence in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight,
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up ;
Sufiolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby,
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

O when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

Michael Drayton.

ST. CRISPIN'S DAY

THIS day is call'd the feast of Crispian :
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say, "To-morrow is Saint Crispian" ;
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say, "These wounds I had on Crispin's day."
Old men forget : yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
This story shall the good man teach his son ;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers ;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother ; be he ne'er so vile
This day shall gentle his condition ;
And gentlemen in England, now a-bed,
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Shakespeare.

BRUCE TO HIS TROOPS, BEFORE THE
BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots wham Bruce has aften led :
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory.

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;
See the front of battle lour ;
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slavery.

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
Wha would fill a coward's grave ?
Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Let him turn and flee !

Wha for Scotland's king and law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa' ?
Let him follow me !

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

By oppression's woes and pains !
By our sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free !

Lay the proud usurpers low !
Tyrants fall in every foe !
Liberty's in every blow !
Let us do, or die !

Robert Burns.

BOADICEA

WHEN the British warrior Queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsels of her country's gods,

Sage beneath the spreading oak,
Sat the Druid, hoary chief ;
Every burning word he spoke,
Full of rage and full of grief.

“Princess ! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
’Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

“Rome shall perish—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt ;
Perish, hopeless and abhor’d,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“Rome, for empire far renown’d,
Tramples on a thousand states ;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark ! the Gaul is at the gates !

“Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier’s name ;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

“Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm’d with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

“Regions Caesar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway ;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.”

Such the bard’s prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

She, with all a monarch's pride
Felt them in her bosom glow ;
Rush'd to battle, fought and died ;
Dying hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due ;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you.

William Cowper.

HORATIUS

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX

LARS PORSENA of Clusium

By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place ;
From many a fruitful plain ;
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine ;

From lordly Volaterræ,
Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old ;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky ;

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves ;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers ;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill ;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill ;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear ;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill ;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill ;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer :
Unharmed the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap,
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep ;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand :
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given :
“Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena ;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven ;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium’s royal dome ;
And hang round Nurscia’s altars
The golden shields of Rome.”

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men ;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten :
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally ;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright :
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways ;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine.
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands ;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain ;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all ;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate ;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly :
“The bridge must straight go down ;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Nought else can save the town.”

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear ;
“To arms ! to arms ! Sir Consul :
Lars Porsena is here.”
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come ;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.

And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

And plainly and more plainly
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine ;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

And plainly and more plainly,
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest
Each warlike Lucumo.

There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen ;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By ready Thrasymene.

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name ;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the towns arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.

"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down ;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town ?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate :
" To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can a man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

" And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame ?

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

“ Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may ;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me ? ”

Then out spake Spurius Lartius ;
A Ramnian proud was he :
“ Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.”
And out spake strong Herminius ;
Of Titian blood was he :
“ I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.”

“ Horatius,” quoth the Consul,
“ As thou sayest, so let it be.”
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome’s quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party ;
Then all were for the state ;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great :
Then lands were fairly portioned !
Then spoils were fairly sold :
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold :
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe :
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes.
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose :
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array ;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way ;

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines :
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines ;

And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath :
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth :
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust ;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three ;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea ;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Herminius smote down Aruns :

Lartius laid Ocnus low :

Right to the heart of Lausulus

Horatius sent a blow.

“Lie there,” he cried, “fell pirate !

No more, aghast and pale,

From Ostia’s walls the crowd shall mark

The track of thy destroying bark.

No more Campania’s hinds shall fly

To woods and caverns when they spy

Thy thrice accursed sail.”

But now no sound of laughter

Was heard among the foes.

A wild and wrathful clamour

From all the vanguard rose.

Six spears’ length from the entrance

Halted that deep array,

And for a space no man came forth

To win the narrow way.

But hark ! the cry is Astur :

And lo ! the ranks divide ;

And the great Lord of Luna

Comes with his stately stride.

Upon his ample shoulders

Clangs loud the fourfold shield,

And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high ;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay :
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way ?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh ;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh :
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space ;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face :

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread ;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here !
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer ?"

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.

There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race ;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three :
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack :
But those behind cried "Forward!"
And those before cried "Back!"
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array ;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel ;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd ;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud,
“Now welcome, welcome, Sextus !
Now welcome to thy home !
Why dost thou stay, and turn away ?
Here lies the road to Rome.”

Thrice looked he at the city ;
Thrice looked he at the dead ;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread :
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied ;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
“Come back, come back, Horatius !”
Loud cried the Fathers all
“Back, Lartius ! back, Herminius !
Back, ere the ruin fall !”

Back darted Spurius Lartius ;
Herminius darted back :
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream :
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind ;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
“Down with him !” cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
“Now yield thee,” cried Lars Porsena,
“Now yield thee to our grace.”

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see ;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he !
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home ;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

“Oh, Tiber ! father Tiber !
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman’s life, a Roman’s arms,
Take thou in charge this day !”
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank ;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank ;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain :
And fast his blood was flowing ;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows ;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place :
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.¹

“Curse on him!” quoth false Sextus ;
“Will not the villain drown ?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town !
“Heaven help him !” quoth Lars Porsena,
“And bring him safe to shore ;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before.”

And now he feels the bottom ;
Now on dry earth he stands ;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands ;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

¹ “Our ladye bare upp her chinne.”

Ballad of Childe Waters.

“Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent’s force ;

Yet, through good heart and our Lady’s grace,
At length he gained the landing place.”

Lay of the Last Minstrel, I.

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night ;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see ;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee :
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home ;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow ;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within ;

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit ;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers
And the kid turns on the spit ;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close ;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows ;

When the goodman mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume ;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom ;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

Lord Macaulay.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold,
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on
the sea,

When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is
green,

That host with their banners at sunset were seen,
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath
blown,

That host on the morrow lay withered and
strewn.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the
blast,

And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed ;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and
chill,

And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever
grew still !

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his
pride,

And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his
mail ;

And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances uplifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the
sword,

Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

Lord Byron.

THE DUEL OF MENELÄUS AND PARIS

The Greek and Trojan armies being ready to engage, a single combat is agreed upon between Meneläus and Paris for the determination of the war. The duel ensues; wherein Paris being overdone, he is snatched away on a cloud by Venus.

WITH eyes averted Hector hastes to turn
The lots of fight and shakes the brazen urn.
Then, Paris, thine leap'd forth; by fatal chance
Ordain'd the first to whirl the weighty lance.
Both armies sat the combat to survey,
Beside each chief his azure armour lay,
And round the lists the generous coursers neigh.
The beauteous warrior now arrays for fight,
In gilded arms magnificently bright:
The purple cuishes clasp his thighs around,
With flowers adorn'd, with silver buckles bound:
Lycaon's corslet his fair body dress'd,
Braced in and fitted to his softer breast;
A radiant baldric, o'er his shoulder tied,
Sustain'd the sword that glitter'd at his side:
His youthful face a polish'd helm o'erspread;
The waving horse-hair nodded on his head;
His figured shield, a shining orb, he takes,
And in his hand a pointed javelin shakes.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

With equal speed and fired by equal charms,
The Spartan hero sheathes his limbs in arms.

Now round the lists the admiring armies stand,
With javelins fix'd, the Greek and Trojan band.
Amidst the dreadful vale, the chiefs advance,
All pale with rage, and shake the threatening lance.
The Trojan first his shining javelin threw,
Full on Atrides' ringing shield it flew,
Nor pierced the brazen orb, but with a bound
Leap'd from the buckler, blunted, on the ground.
Atrides then his massy lance prepares,
In act to throw, but first prefers his prayers :

“ Give me, great Jove ! to punish lawless lust,
And lay the Trojan gasping in the dust :
Destroy the aggressor, aid my righteous cause,
Avenge the breach of hospitable laws !
Let this example future times reclaim,
And guard from wrong fair friendship's holy name,”
He said, and poised in air the javelin sent,
Through Paris' shield the forceful weapon went,
His corslet pierces, and his garment rends,
And glancing downward, near his flank descends.
The wary Trojan, bending from the blow,
Eludes the death, and disappoints his foe :
But fierce Atrides waved his sword, and strook
Full on his casque : the crested helmet shook ;
The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Broke short : the fragments glitter'd on the sand.
The raging warrior to the spacious skies
Raised his upbraiding voice and angry eyes :
"Then is it vain in Jove himself to trust ?
And is it thus the gods assist the just ?
When crimes provoke us, Heaven success denies ;
The dart falls harmless, and the falchion flies."
Furious he said, and towards the Grecian crew
(Seized by the crest) the unhappy warrior drew ;
Struggling he follow'd, while the embroider'd
thong
That tied his helmet, dragg'd the chief along.
Then had his ruin crown'd Atrides' joy,
But Venus trembled for the prince of Troy :
Unseen she came, and burst the golden band ;
And left an empty helmet in his hand.
The casque, enraged, amidst the Greeks he threw ;
The Greeks with smiles the polished trophy view.
Then, as once more he lifts the deadly dart,
In thirst of vengeance, at his rival's heart ;
The queen of love her favour'd champion shrouds
(For gods can all things) in a veil of clouds.
Raised from the field the panting youth she led,
And gently laid him on the bridal bed,
With pleasing sweets his fainting sense renew'd,
And all the dome perfumes with heavenly dews.

Homer.

PATRIOTIC AND
MISCELLANEOUS



“ENGLAND, MY ENGLAND”

WHAT have I done for you,
England, my England ?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own ?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near
Whispering terrible things and dear,
As the Song on your bugles blown,
England —
Round the world on your bugles blown !

Where shall the watchful sun,
England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
England, my own ?
When shall he rejoice agen,
Such a breed of mighty men,
As come forward, one to ten,
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England —
Down the years on your bugles blown ?

Ever the faith endures,
England, my England :—
Take and break us : we are yours,
England, my own !

Life is good and joy runs high
Between English earth and sky :
Death is Death ; but we shall die
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England —
To the stars on your bugles blown !

They call you proud and hard,
England, my England,
You with worlds to watch and ward,
England, my own !

You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies,
You could know nor dread nor ease
Were the Song on your bugles blown,
England —

Round the pit on your bugles blown !

Mother of Ships whose might,
England, my England,
Is the fierce old Sea's delight,
England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient Sword,
There's the menace of the Word
In the Song on your bugles blown,
England —
Out of Heaven on your bugles blown !

W. E. Henley.

“ENGLAND”

ENGLAND, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country ; and, while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee. Though thy
clime

Be fickle, and thy year most part deformed
With dripping rains, or withered by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
And fields without a flower, for warmer France
With all her vines : nor for Ausonia's groves
Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bowers.
To shake thy senate and from heights sublime
Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task :
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
As any thunderer there. And I can feel
Thy follies, too ; and with a just disdain
Frown at effeminate, whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
Should England prosper, when such things, as
smooth

And tender as a girl, all essenc'd o'er
With odours, and as profligate as sweet ;
Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
And love when they should fight ; when such as
these

Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
Of her magnificent and awful cause ?

Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In every clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children, Praise enough
To fill the ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.

W. Cowper.

RULE, BRITANNIA !

WHEN Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sang the strain :

Rule Britannia ! Britannia rules the waves !
Britons never shall be slaves !

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish great and free—
The dread and envy of them all !

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke ;
As the last blast which tears thy skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame ;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

To thee belongs the rural reign ;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine ;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine.

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair ;
Blest Isle with matchless beauty crown'd,
And manly hearts to guard the fair :—

Rule, Britannia ! Britannia rules the waves !
Britons never shall be slaves !

James Thomson.

HEARTS OF OAK

COME, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year,
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?
Hearts of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our
men,

We always are ready.

Steady boys, steady,

We'll fight, and we'll conquer again and again.

We ne'er see our foes but we wish them to stay,
They never see us but they wish us away ;
If they run, why, we follow, and run them ashore,
For if they won't fight us we cannot do more.
Hearts of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our
men,

We always are ready,

Steady boys, steady,

We'll fight, and we'll conquer again and again.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Still Britain shall triumph, her ships plough the sea,

Her standard be justice, her watchword "Be Free,"
Then, cheer up, my lads, with one heart let us sing

Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen, our king.
Hearts of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our men

We always are ready,

Steady boys, steady,

We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

David Garrick.

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND

THE stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand
Amidst their tall ancestral trees
O'er all the pleasant land.
The deer across their greensward bound
Through shade and sunny gleam ;
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The merry homes of England !
Around their hearths by night
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light !
There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The blessed homes of England !
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath hours !
Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bell's chime
Floats through their woods at morn ;
All other sounds in that still time
Of breeze and leaf are born.

The cottage homes of England !
By thousands on her plains,
They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
And round the hamlet fanes.
Through glowing orchards forth they peep,
Each from its nook of leaves ;
And fearless there the lowly sleep
As the birds beneath their eaves.

The free, fair homes of England !
Long, long in hut and hall
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall !
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God !

Felicia D. Hemans.

HERE'S A HEALTH

HERE's a health unto His Majesty
With a fa, la, la, la, la, la !
Confusion to his enemies,
With a fa, la, la, la, la, la !
And he that will not drink his health,
I wish him neither wit nor wealth,
Nor yet a rope to hang himself, !
With a fa, la, la, la, la !

Anonymous

MEN OF ENGLAND

MEN of England ! who inherit
Rights that cost your sires their blood !
Men whose undegenerate spirit,
Has been proved on land and flood—

By the foes ye've fought, uncounted,
By the glorious deeds ye've done,
Trophies captured—breaches mounted,
Navies conquered—kingdoms won.

Yet remember, England gathers,
Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the valour of your fathers
Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
Where no public virtues bloom ?
What avail in lands of slavery
Trophied temples, arch and tomb ?

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Pageants ! Let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breast of civic heroes
Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
Sydney's matchless shade is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a thousand Agincourts !

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crown and mitred tyranny :—
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthrights—so will we !

Thomas Campbell.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

YE mariners of England !
That guard our native seas ;
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze !
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe !
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirit of your fathers
Shall start from every wave !
For the deck it was their field of fame
And ocean was their grave ;
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep,
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below.
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow ;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn :
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors !
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow ;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

Thomas Campbell.

PIBROCH OF DONUIL DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons !
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons !

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky ;
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter ;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar ;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges :
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended,
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded :
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come ;
See how they gather !
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set ;
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset !

Sir Walter Scott.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

OUR bugles sang truce—for the night-cloud had lowered

And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky ;
And thousands had sunk on the ground over-powered,

The weary to sleep and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring fagot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battlefield's dreadful array,
Far, far, I had roamed on a desolate track ;
'Twas autumn—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomes me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young ;

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn reapers
sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to
part;

My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fulness of heart.

“Stay, stay with us—rest, thou art weary and
worn,”

And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice on my dreaming ear melted away.

Thomas Campbell.

“THE POWER OF ARMIES IS A VISIBLE THING”

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space ;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed ? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to year
Springs this indigenous produce far and near ;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

(1811)

William Wordsworth.

THE "CUMBERLAND"

At anchor in Hampton Roads we lay,
On board of the *Cumberland*, sloop-of-war ;
And at times from the fortress across the bay
The alarum of drums swept past,
Or a bugle blast
From the camp on the shore.

Then far away to the south uprose
A little feather of snow-white smoke,
And we knew that the iron ship of our foes
Was steadily steering its course
To try the force
Of our ribs of oak.

Down upon us heavily runs,
Silent and sullen, the floating fort ;
Then comes a puff of smoke from her guns,
And leaps the terrible death,
With fiery breath,
From each open port.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

We are not idle, but send her straight,
Defiance back in a full broad-side !
As hail rebounds from a roof of slate,
Rebounds our heavier hail
From each iron scale
Of the monster's hide.

“ Strike your flag ! ” the rebel cries,
In his arrogant old plantation strain.
“ Never ! ” our gallant Morris replies ;
“ It is better to sink than to yield ! ”
And the whole air pealed
With the cheers of our men.

Then, like a kracken huge and black,
She crushed our ribs in her iron grasp !
Down went the *Cumberland* all a wrack,
With a sudden shudder of death,
And the cannon's breath
For her dying gasp.

Next morn, as the sun rose over the bay,
Still floated our flag at the mainmast-head.
Lord, how beautiful was thy day !
Every waft of the air
Was a whisper of prayer,
Or a dirge for the dead.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Ho ! brave hearts that went down in the seas !
Ye are at peace in the troubled stream
Ho ! brave land ! with hearts like these,
Thy flag, that is rent in twain,
Shall be one again,
And without a seam !

Longfellow.

THE BRITISH GRENADIERS

SOME talk of Alexander, and some of Hercules,
Of Hector and Lysander, and such great names as
these,
But of all the world's great heroes, there's none
that can compare
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row to the British
Grenadiers !

Those heroes of antiquity ne'er saw a cannon-ball,
Or knew the force of powder to slay their foes
withal,
But our brave boys do know it, and banish all
their fears
Sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British
Grenadiers !

Whene'er we are commanded to storm the palisades
Our leaders march with fuses, and we with hand
grenades,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

We throw them from the glacis, about the enemies' ears,

Sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, the British Grenadiers !

And when the siege is over, we to the town repair,
The townsmen cry, "Hurrah, boys, here comes a Grenadier !

Here come the Grenadiers, my boys, who know no doubts or fears !"

Then sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, the British Grenadiers !

Then let us fill a bumper, and drink a health to those

Who carry caps and pouches and wear the loused clothes,

May they and their commanders live happy all their years,

With a tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers !

Anonymous.

THE BLUE BELL OF SCOTLAND

Oh where and oh where, is your Highland laddie
gone ?

He's gone to fight the French for King George upon
the throne ;

And it's oh, in my heart, how I wish him safe at
home !

Oh where and oh where, does your Highland laddie
dwell ?

He dwells in merry Scotland, at the sign of the
Blue Bell ;

And it's oh, in my heart, that I love my Highland
laddie well.

In what clothes, in what clothes is your Highland
laddie clad ?

His bonnet's of the Saxon green, his waistcoat's of
the plaid ;

And it's oh, in my heart, that I love my Highland
lad.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Suppose, oh, suppose, that your Highland lad should
die ?

The bagpipes shall play over him, and I'll lay me
down and cry ;
And it's oh, in my heart, that I wish he may not
die.

Anonymous.

ENGLAND'S DEAD

Son of the ocean isle !
Where sleep your mighty dead ?
Show me what high and stately pile
Is reared o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger ! track the deep,
Free, free, the white sail spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
By the pyramid o'erswayed,
With fearful power the noonday reigns,
And the palm-trees yield no shade.

But let the angry sun
From heaven look fiercely red,
Unfelt by those whose task is done !—
There slumber England's dead.

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

The hurricane hath might
Along the Indian shore,
And far by Ganges banks at night
Is heard the tiger's roar.

But let the sound roll on !
It hath no tone of dread
For those that from their toils are gone ;—
There slumber England's dead.

Loud rush the torrent-floods
The western wilds among,
And free in green Columbia's woods
The hunter's bow is strung.

But let the floods rush on !
Let the arrow's flight be sped !
Why should they reck whose task is done ?—
There slumber England's dead.

The mountain-storms rise high
In the snowy Pyrenees,
And toss the pine-boughs through the sky
Like rose-leaves on the breeze

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

But let the storm rage on !
Let the fresh wreaths be shed !
For the Roncesvalles' field is won—
There slumber England's dead

On the frozen deep's repose,
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields close
And the northern night-clouds lower.

But let the ice drift on !
Let the cold-blue desert spread !
Their course with mast and flag is done—
Even there sleep England's dead.

The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave !
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave ?

Go, stranger ! track the deep,
Free, free, the white sail spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

Felicia D. Hemans.

THE *ARETHUSA*

COME, all ye jolly sailors bold,
Whose hearts are cast in honour's mould,
While English glory I unfold,
 Huzza to the *Arethusa*.

She is a frigate tight and brave,
As ever stemmed the dashing wave ;
Her men are staunch
To their fav'rite launch,
And when the foe shall meet our fire,
Sooner than strike we'll all expire,
 On board of the *Arethusa*.

'Twas with the spring fleet she went out,
The English Channel to cruise about,
When four French sail, in show so stout,
 Bore down on the *Arethusa*.

The famed *Belle Poule* straight ahead did lie,
The *Arethusa* seemed to fly,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Not a sheet, or a tack,
Or a brace, did she slack,
Though the Frenchman laughed and thought it
stuff,
But they knew not the handful of men, how tough,
On board of the *Arethusa*.

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France,
We, with two hundred did advance,
On board of the *Arethusa*.

Our Captain hailed the Frenchman, "Ho!"
The Frenchman then cried out "Hallo!"
"Bear down, d'ye see,
To our Admiral's lee!"
"No, no," says the Frenchman, "that can't be!"
"Then I must lug you along with me!"
Says the saucy *Arethusa*.

The fight was off the Frenchman's land,
We forced them back upon their strand,
For we fought till not a stick would stand,
Of the gallant *Arethusa*.

And now we've driven the foe ashore,
Never to fight with Britons more,

BATTLE POEMS AND PATRIOTIC VERSES

Let each fill a glass,
To his fav'rite lass !
A health to our Captain and officers true,
And all that belong to the jovial crew,
On board of the *Arethusa*.

Prince Hoare.

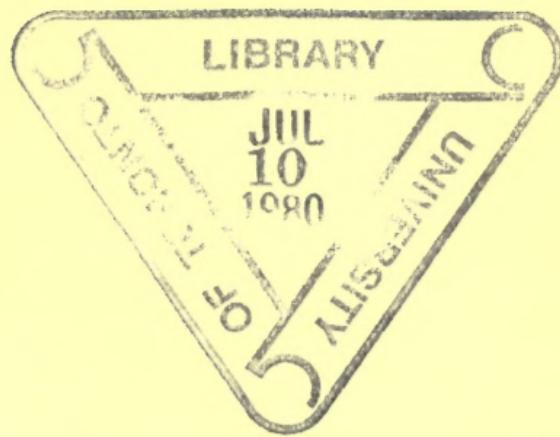
GOD SAVE THE KING

GOD save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
God save the King.
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King.

O Lord our God arise ;
Scatter his enemies,
And make them fall.
Confound their politics,
Frustate their knavish tricks ;
On Thee our hopes we fix,
God save us all.

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On him be pleased to pour,
Long may he reign.
May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause,
To sing, with heart and voice,
God save the King.

Henry Carey.





H. HAWARD

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Goodchild, George
England, my England

